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C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 001925

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: TASK FORCE TO PRESENT UNIFIED VOICE FOR POLITICAL
PARTIES AND GOVERNMENT

REF: KATHMANDU 1908

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Nick Dean. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

SUMMARY

11. (C) On July 18, the Seven-Party Alliance (SPA) formed a 20-member task force to incorporate the differing opinions of the political party leaders into a unified agenda for the July 21 talks between the Government of Nepal (GON) and Maoist negotiation teams. Nepal Sadbhavana Party - Anandi Devi (NSP-A) leaders told CDA that the task force would tackle the issues of the cease-fire Code of Conduct, arms management, and Parliament dissolution. The SPA also created a steering committee to work on procedural guidelines for the talks. The NSP-A interlocutors assured us that the GON, which they said has not always been on the same page as the SPA, would follow the recommendations of the new committees. Continued Maoist violations of the Code of Conduct and lone ranger decisions by the Nepali Congress and CPN-UML suggest that the task force will have limited policy effect.

SEVEN PARTIES, ONE VOICE?

12. (C) On July 18, Bharat Bimal Yadav, Vice President of the NSP-A, told CDA that the SPA had formed a 20-member task force to bring together the divergent stances of the political parties on the issues of cease-fire and peace-process conduct, Maoist and Nepal Army weapons management, and the dissolution of Parliament. Yadav said the task force, agreed in the SPA meeting that morning, would compile the views of the party leaders and incorporate them into a cohesive statement. Upon approval of the SPA leaders, that one document would provide the basis of a unified SPA voice for the July 21 talks between the Maoist and GON negotiation teams. Anil Jha, a Central Committee member of the NSP-A, told us that the SPA task force would coordinate policy and information between the GON and the SPA so that these two entities would appear more unified as well. In addition to the task force, the SPA convened a steering committee of the top seven-party leaders to provide procedural guidelines for the upcoming talks. Yadav insisted that the GON would accept and implement any SPA decision.

13. (SBU) The 20-member task force includes representatives

from all seven political parties in the alliance:

-Nepali Congress: Ram Baran Yadav, Arjun Narsingh KC, and Amod Prasad Upadhyaya;
-CPN-UML: Ishwor Pokharel, Ashta Laxmi Shakya, and Surendra Pandey;
-Nepali Congress-Democratic: Prakash Sharan Mahat, Minendra Rizal, and Homnath Dahal;
-People's Front Nepal: Lilamani Pokharel and Navraj Subedi;
-Nepal Workers and Peasants Party: Sunil Prajapati, Punmaya Maharajan, and Prem Suwal;
-NSP-A: Anil Jha, Sarita Giri, and Rajendra Mahato;
-United Left Front: Sitaram Tamang, Hemanta BC, and Rhishi Kattel.

DISCONNECT BETWEEN GON AND SPA

14. (C) Yadav emphasized that the GON and SPA were separate bodies. He described the dissatisfaction that many in the SPA felt toward the GON. Using the Nepal Army as an example of misunderstanding, Yadav stressed that the GON should clarify ambiguities in the Army's relationship with the civil government and the Palace. He asserted that the Army was committed to democracy, but certain actions, such as Chief of Army Staff Pyar Jung Thapa's July 7 birthday visit to the King, sent mixed messages. Yadav agreed with CDA that unity among and between the SPA and GON was essential for Nepal's democratic transformation and success against the Maoists.

MAOIST ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

15. (C) The NSP-A leader lamented that the Maoists were committed to the peace process on paper but not in the field. He cited the Maoists' failure to return seized property, cease extortion, and improve humanitarian conditions. Yadav pointed out that the Maoists were always on the offensive despite the SPA's concessions in the peace process. He said that the Maoists' "true nature" was to take a mile when given an inch. Yadav suggested that a Seven-Party "counter-offensive," presumably something the task force could design, would bind the Maoists into honoring their agreements with the political parties. When CDA questioned exactly how the SPA would co-opt the Maoists, Yadav sidestepped a concrete response but replied that he was optimistic that the Maoists truly wanted to join mainstream politics.

COMMENT

16. (C) The political parties understand the importance of presenting a united front to the Maoists. However, the SPA task force appears geared more toward appeasing the minor parties in the alliance than an actual policy-making body. Yadav and Jha echoed the sentiment of other party interlocutors who resent Nepali Congress and CPN-UML leaders directing SPA interaction with the Maoists (reftel). There is little indication that the formation of the 20-member SPA task force reflects a real commitment by the two largest SPA parties to forgo their predilection for backroom deals.
DEAN